

**Amendments to the Claims**

Please cancel claims 1-13 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 15 and 16 as set forth below.

Please add new claims 17-27 as presented below.

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the present application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-14 (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 13, further comprising~~ A method for suppression of gene expression in a cell comprising:

(a) administering to the cell *in vitro* a suppressive-effective amount of ~~the~~ a nucleic acid construct comprising in 5' to 3' operable orientation:

(i) a 5' stem loop structure;

(ii) an antisense nucleic acid; and

(iii) a 3' stem loop structure,

wherein the antisense nucleic acid suppresses gene expression and is flanked by the stem loop structures and with the proviso that the antisense nucleic acid is not within the 5' or 3' stem loop structures of the construct; and

(b) administering a modified nucleic acid encoding a wild-type polypeptide corresponding to the gene product of the gene being suppressed, wherein the modified nucleic acid is resistant to ribozyme cleavage and/or antisense inhibition,  
whereby expression of the gene is suppressed in the cell.

16. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid construct of claim 1, ~~wherein the construct comprises SEQ ID NO: 3~~ for suppressing gene expression comprising SEQ ID NO: 3 and in 5' to 3' operable orientation:

- (a) a 5' stem loop structure;
- (b) an antisense nucleic acid; and
- (c) a 3' stem loop structure,

wherein the antisense nucleic acid suppresses gene expression and is flanked by the stem loop structures and with the proviso that the antisense nucleic acid is not within the 5' or 3' stem loop structures of the construct.

- 17. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 16, wherein the stem loop structures are U snRNA structures.
- 18. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 17, wherein the U snRNA is U1.
- 19. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 16, further comprising a promoter.
- 20. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 19, wherein the promoter is a U1 snRNA promoter.
- 21. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 19, wherein the promoter is a constitutive promoter.
- 22. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 19, wherein the promoter is an inducible promoter.
- 23. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 16, further comprising a ribozyme nucleic acid.
- 24. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 23, wherein the ribozyme nucleic acid is located between the 5' and 3' stem loop structures.

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25. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 23, wherein the ribozyme nucleic acid is a hammerhead-type ribozyme.
26. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 23, wherein a consensus sequence for ribozyme cleavage in a target nucleic acid is 5'-GUC-3' or 5'-GUA-3'.
27. (New) The nucleic acid construct of claim 16, wherein the antisense nucleic acid is rent-1, HPV E6, HIV, hyaluronic acid synthase, or fibrillin.